

Today, our Nation is at an inflection point that will determine our future for decades to come. But because of the investments that we have made, the United States of America is better positioned to lead than any Nation on Earth. The Budget reflects our values as a Nation—a Nation of good people, growing in a new age of possibilities, and standing as a beacon to the world. Together, let us put those values into practice and prove that democracy delivers as we keep building a stronger, fairer economy that leaves no one behind.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR.
THE WHITE HOUSE, March 2023.

□ 1845

WATER STORAGE IS KEY TO CALIFORNIA'S ABILITY TO WEATHER DROUGHTS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, recently the California Department of Water Resources announced that water deliveries throughout the State Water Project would be increased to 75 percent of requested amounts. Also, the Bureau of Reclamation made a similar announcement on 100 percent in certain districts in northern California.

The State levels have increased from an announced 35 percent earlier on. These increases are possible due to the massive amount of rain and snowpack California has received from a series of winter storms.

Many of our State's reservoirs, once teetering on the brink of being empty, are rapidly filling. While these increased water allocations are good news, there is still a pressing need for more water storage in California.

Sites Reservoir in my district, a project that should already have been built, would already have 1½ million acre-feet of water in it. Raising Shasta Dam farther north only 18 feet would result in 630,000 more acre-feet. One acre-foot of water, for example, is enough to sustain two California families for a whole year.

Improving the flood controls and modernizing some of our water infrastructure would allow us to keep more stormwater. Storage is key for California's ability to weather droughts for more than 1 year. Store the water we get in the winter and we will have it when we need it in the summer.

HONORING THE LIFE OF VALERIE "VAL" MCCAIN

(Mr. NEWHOUSE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to honor and remember the life of a dear friend and an inspiration to central Washington communities, Valerie

"Val" McCain, who unexpectedly passed away this past Sunday.

Val was an incredible leader with over 30 years of industry experience across several continents. At the time of her death, she served as the project director of the Hanford Tank Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant and as senior vice president of Bechtel.

Val was an inspiration to workers across the Hanford site and in the Tri-Cities communities. She also served our local and government communities on boards of the Energy Facility Contractors Group, TRIDEC, The STEM Foundation, and Columbia Industries.

Val's death is a loss for our community, but her leadership and contributions to central Washington will never be forgotten. We should all strive to emulate her engagement and selfless citizenship.

May she rest in peace.

CONGRATULATING COACH BRANDON JERNIGAN

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coach Brandon Jernigan, the athletic director at Pierce County High School.

Brandon has been named the Georgia High School Association's Region 2A athletic director of the year. He has been a coach for 24 years and has spent the last 15 years at Pierce County High School. For the last 6 years, he has served as Pierce County High School's athletic director.

During his time as athletic director, Pierce County has achieved many notable athletic accomplishments, including the school's first State football championship. He has also overlooked large expansion projects for the football, baseball, and softball fields.

Brandon is much more than just an athletic director. He is a pillar of his community and someone who has made a lasting impact on everyone around him. His impact on our young men and women will be felt for generations to come.

Congratulations on this wonderful accomplishment.

FIGHTING TO REESTABLISH ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NEWHOUSE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, throughout the month of March, the Western Caucus has been highlighting the need for permitting reform in almost every aspect of the Federal Government.

Permitting and regulatory reform have long been a priority for the Western Caucus and it has become even more important in recent months.

As our Nation fights to reestablish energy independence, we need certainty for American energy producers and a reliable process for increased critical mineral mining.

As catastrophic wildfires threaten the West year after year, we need permitting processes that empower State and local land managers to effectively manage our forests and our grasslands.

As rural communities are faced with more and more Federal overreach from the Biden administration, they deserve certainty and transparency. That is why we must reform our broken permitting processes to unlock American investment and unleash the potential of rural America.

Landmark environmental protection laws like NEPA and the ESA have truly gotten out of control. While well intentioned they are, they are now used by serial litigants to stall critical infrastructure and management projects.

These far-left environmental groups use these statutes to drive political wedges and ensure America is dependent on her adversaries. Endless cycles of litigation tie the hands of project developers, of land managers, and of private conservationists, all while posing a serious threat to both our local economies as well as our environment.

As a farmer from the central part of the State of Washington and as chairman of the Congressional Western Caucus, I see how regulations from the Federal Government have disproportionately negatively impacted our rural communities. This is unfair for so many reasons, but the main one being that these are exactly the men and women that we should be empowering.

In rural America, our livelihoods depend on a healthy environment and on our natural resources. We truly have a vested interest in and a storied history of protecting our lands and our waters. We just need the Federal Government to literally get out of our way.

That is why House Republicans have introduced H.R. 1, the Lower Energy Costs Act, to deliver on our promise to unleash American energy and lower prices for all consumers, regardless of what industry they are engaged in.

H.R. 1 updates our broken permitting process to actually let Americans mine, let Americans farm, let Americans manufacture, to process, and to build so that our country can grow and thrive once more.

Today, I am joined by Western Caucus members from across our country who will shed light on how broke permitting processes throughout the Federal Government have kneecapped